

U.S. Department of Commerce
Performance Appraisal System
for Senior Executive Service

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page</u>
Section 1.	Legal Requirements and Authorities.....	1
Section 2.	Objectives.....	1
Section 3.	Coverage.....	1
Section 4.	Responsibilities.....	1
Section 5.	Timetable for Performance Management Activities.....	1-2
Section 6.	Performance Appraisal Process.....	3-11
Section 7.	Performance Review Boards.....	12
Section 8.	Failure to Meet Performance Requirements.....	13
Section 9.	Training and Information.....	13
Section 10.	Evaluation.....	13-14
Section 11.	Record Keeping.....	13-14
Section 12.	Definitions.....	13-16
Appendix A		

SECTION 1. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORITIES.

- .01 Statutory and Regulatory Authorities:
 - a. Chapter 43 of Title 5, U.S. Code (5 U.S.C.4311-4314).
 - b. Code of Federal Regulations, Part 430, Subpart C.
- .02 Related Policy Issuances.
 - a. DAO 202-430, Performance Appraisal
 - b. SES Manual, Chapter 13, Performance Appraisal.

SECTION 2. OBJECTIVES.

The Department s Senior Executive Performance Appraisal System serves as the basis for:

- .01 Establishing critical elements and related performance standards for each covered position, which, to the maximum extent feasible, permit the accurate evaluation of job performance on the basis of objective criteria related to the position;
- .02 Using performance plans to communicate Department goals and objectives and to identify individual accountability for their accomplishment;
- .03 Using performance appraisal results as a basis for providing information to senior executives on their performance and how it may be improved; and for adjusting base pay, training, rewarding, reassigning, retaining, and removing senior executives; and
- .04 Evaluating and improving individual and organizational accomplishments.

SECTION 3. COVERAGE

The Senior Executive Performance Appraisal System applies to all senior executives of the Department who occupy Senior Executive Service (SES) positions, including career, non-career, and SES limited appointees.

SECTION 4. RESPONSIBILITIES (RESERVED)

SECTION 5. TIMETABLE OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

- .01 The Department s performance appraisal period begins on October 1 and ends the following September 30. In unusual circumstances, the performance appraisal period may be ended early provided the 120-day minimum period is met and provided an adequate basis to rate the executive s performance exists.
- .02 The minimum performance appraisal period is 120 days.
- .03 Performance elements and standards based on the requirements of their positions must be

communicated to all senior executives at or before the beginning of the appraisal period. A written plan must be established, approved, and provided to each senior executive, normally within 30 days of the beginning of the appraisal period.

- .04 When a senior executive enters a covered position or changes positions after the start of the appraisal period, a performance plan must be established and approved within 30 days of the effective date of the appointment to the new position.
- .05 When a senior executive is detailed or temporarily assigned to a covered position within the department and is expected to serve in the position for 120 days or more, he/she must have an approved performance plan within 30 days of the beginning of the detail.
- .06 Interim summary performance ratings are required when a senior executive changes positions after serving in a covered position for at least 120 days, or when a senior executive completes a detail within the Department of at least 120 days during the appraisal period, and must be completed within 30 days of the change of position or end of the detail.
- .07 Appraisals and annual rating of record must be completed within 30 days of the end of the appraisal period, except that senior executives who are unratable at the end of the appraisal period because they have not served in a covered position for at least 120 days of the appraisal period, must be rated after completing 120 days in a covered position.
- .08 Appointing authorities must complete the Department's annual performance plan completion report and forward it to the Department by November 30 each year.
- .09 Performance rating of record for senior executives are effective on the last day of the appraisal cycle (September 30) each year. For those senior executives who enter into a covered position within the last 120 days of the appraisal period (see .07 above), the rating of record is effective the first day of the first pay period after the senior executive completes 120 days in the new position.
- .10 Notwithstanding any other requirement of this document, a career senior executive may not be appraised and rated within 120 days after the beginning of a new Presidential Administration.

SECTION 6. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL PROCESS.

The appraisal process involves three distinct stages: performance planning, process review, and appraisal. Each covered senior executive must receive a performance rating annually. The appraisal process is used to communicate organizational goals, reinforce senior executive accountability for those goals, and track and evaluate individual and organizational results.

.01 Performance Planning

a. Approximately four weeks before the start of the appraisal period, rating officials (supervisors) and senior executives should begin developing written performance plans for the next appraisal period. The process must include consultation with the senior executive about the contents of the plan. Performance plans must be recorded on form CD-396, Performance Plan, Progress Review, Appraisal record. Performance plans must be completed and signed by the rating official and the senior executive at the beginning of the appraisal period, normally within 30 days. Performance plans must include:

1. Critical (and non-critical) elements which reflect the senior executive's major duties and responsibilities and which are consistent with current job assignments and with the level of duties described in the senior executive's position description. (Although the Department discourages inclusion of non-critical elements in performance plans, occasionally a rating official may need to include some. If small percentage of the total plan.) The number of critical job elements should be kept to a manageable level, normally not more than five or six. Organizational objectives must be included in performance plans by incorporating objectives, goals, program plans, work plans, or by other similar means that account for program results. Elements may be drawn from a number of sources including: mission and functional statements, position descriptions, management-by-objectives (MBOs) and other planning documents, operating budget justifications, and affirmative action plans. A senior executive's responsibility for accomplishing part or all of an MBO must be included as a critical element or a major activity of a critical element. If the element relates to a Secretarial level objective, it must be designated on form CD-396 as critical and as being tracked at the Department level. Other factors that must be accounted for in performance plans for senior executives include: improvement in efficiency, productivity, quality of work or service; any significant reduction in paperwork; cost efficiency; timeliness of performance; other indicators of effectiveness, productivity, and performance quality of the employees supervised; or meeting affirmative action goals and achievement of equal employment opportunity requirements. An objective, specifying the overall result each element is expected to accomplish, along with the major activities the senior executive must undertake to accomplish each element, must be communicated in writing in the senior executive's performance plan. For any job designated as supervisory, duties such as recommending or making personnel decisions, developing and appraising subordinates, fulfilling equal opportunity and affirmative action responsibilities, and other supervisory duties must be addressed as a critical element (or as major activities of a critical element). Additionally, supervisors and managers who fail to meet performance appraisal deadlines (including development of performance plans) as specified in this document should have their own appraisals so documented. Developing generic critical (and non-critical) elements is strongly encouraged.

2. Weights must be assigned to each element on the basis of the amount of time required to accomplish the element and/or its importance. The total of the weights must be 100 percent. Assigning weights to the major activities listed under an element is not permitted. Non-critical

elements may be included in performance plans, but must be signed very low weights and

represent a small percentage of the total plan. In no case may a non-critical element be assigned a higher weight than any critical element included in the performance plan.

a. Performance standards must be used to elevate levels of accomplishment for critical (and any non-critical) elements. Standards should define performance in terms of results (what is to be accomplished) and process (how it is to be accomplished). Note: The results may already be expressed under the major activities listing. In such a case they do not need to be repeated as standards since they are already specified for the senior executive. The generic performance standards (GPS) contained in Appendix A are defined at each of the five required rating levels and must be used to evaluate the performance of all senior executives covered by this system.

Specific quantitative, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and qualitative standards, if they apply to a particular critical element, and if they will be used to evaluate a senior executive's performance, must be included as supplemental standards. (If these standards are specified in operational manuals or other documents made available to the senior executive, those documents may simply be referenced in the performance plan.) Such standards need to be written only at the Fully Successful level, since the GPS are written at all five performance level and refer generically to different levels of quality, timeliness, quantity, and cost-effectiveness.

b. If a rating official and covered senior executive disagree on the contents of the performance plan, the rating official and senior executive should attempt to resolve on an informal basis. However, the rating official must make the final decision regarding the contents of the plan.

c. When developing performance plans, the following factors should be considered:

1. Criticality/Relevance. Have appropriate critical elements been identified? Are the elements derived from the overall mission of the work unit?

2. Comprehensiveness. Does the plan cover all of the senior executive's major duties and responsibilities?

3. Clarity. Are critical elements and performance standards clearly and fully described.

4. Quantification. Can achievements be measured with the standards identified.

d. When a senior executive enters a cover position or moves from one covered position to another after the start of the appraisal period, and when a senior executive serves on a detail of 120 days or more, a performance plan must be established and approved for the senior executive, following the guidelines in .01a-c of this section.

.02 Progress Reviews.

a. At a minimum, rating officials must conduct a formal progress review with their senior executives at approximately the mid-point of the appraisal period. Senior executives may also request (or rating officials may schedule) additional progress reviews.

The progress review must include decision of:

1. The senior executive s progress towards meeting the objectives of the elements included in his or her performance plan;
 2. The need for changes in the plan based on changes in responsibilities;
 3. The identification of any performance deficiencies and recommendations on how to improve them by the rating official.
- b. There must be a record of the progress review. Both the supervisor and senior executive should date and initial the performance plan to indicate the review took place.
- c. Progress reviews should also be scheduled and conducted for senior executives who enter covered positions after the start of the appraisal period. These progress reviews should be completed near the midpoint of the shortened appraisal period.
- d. A progress review must also be initiated by the rating official if a senior executive s performance on one or more critical elements falls below the Fully Successful level. In such a case the rating official must discuss the instances of less than Fully Successful performance and outline in writing what is required by the senior executive to bring his or her performance up to the Fully Successful level.

.03 Appraisal.

- a. Senior executives must be appraised annually. Every senior executive who occupies a covered position on the last day of the appraisal cycle and who has been in a covered position for at least 120 days during the appraisal cycle must receive an annual performance appraisal rating of record, in accordance with the following.
1. Rating officials must prepare and discuss with each senior executive they supervise an initial written rating of performance. This rating must be on an assessment of the merit of the senior executive s performance against the standards set at the beginning of the period (or as modified and documented during a progress review) in the performance plan and must include a written rating for each individual performance element based on the following.

Outstanding	(5)	Meets or exceeds standards written at this level.
Commendable	(4)	Meets standards written at this level.
Fully Successful	(3)	Meets standards written at this level.
Minimally Satisfactory	(2)	Meets standards written at this level.

Unsatisfactory (1) Meets (or falls below standards at this level.

2. Each critical (and non-critical) element must be rated using the above five-level element rating scale. Ratings elements above and below Fully Successful must be supported by narrative justification. If an element is rated as Fully Successful, the rating official need only document in writing that: (1) the Fully Successful standards were met, and (2) that the rating was discussed with the senior executive, unless the senior executive requests written justification of the Fully Successful rating. In such a case, the rating official must provide written justification of the rating.

3. To obtain the overall summary rating, each element must be rated using the five-level element rating scale (Outstanding=5, Commendable=4, Fully Successful=3, Minimally Satisfactory=2, and Unsatisfactory=1. No fractional scores or weights may be used.) Then, each individual element rating is multiplied by the weight assigned to that element (e.g., critical element #1 is weighed at 30 percent and receives a rating of Commendable or 4; 4×30 percent = 120 points). The points assigned to the individual elements are then totaled to determine an overall summary rating based on the following scale:

Outstanding	461 - 500
Commendable	380 - 460
Fully Successful	290 - 379
*Minimally	*200 - 289
Unsatisfactory	A summary rating of Unsatisfactory must be assigned to any senior executive who is given an Unsatisfactory rating on one or more critical elements.

*A covered senior executive who fails to meet at least the Fully Successful level standards in one (or more) critical element(s) must not be given a Fully Successful or above rating, no matter what point total the senior executive earns.

4. If a senior executive has received an interim summary performance rating for service in another covered position within the Department during the appraisal period (as provided for in .03(d) of this section), then that summary rating (or ratings) must be considered as follows in determining the senior executive s final rating of record:

The rating official completes his or her appraisal of the senior executives on his/her current position (if in that position for 120 days or more of the appraisal period) and assigns a total score. That score is doubled and added to the interim rating score(s) given by any other supervisors.

This new total is then divided by the number of positions occupied for 120 days or more plus 1, i.e., either 3 or 4, and a final total score is assigned. (Scores with decimals should be rounded to the next highest number.) For example:

Example 1. Interim rating score: $360 \times 1 = 360$
Current rating official s score: $480 \times 2 = \underline{960}$
1,320
 $1,320 / 3 = 440$
The senior executive s recommended rating would be 440 or
Commendable.

Example 2. Interim rating score: $390 \times 1 = 390$
Interim rating score: $375 \times 1 = 375$
Current rating official s score $450 \times 2 = \underline{900}$
1,665
 $1,665 / 4 = 417$
The senior executive s recommended rating would be 417 or
Commendable.

In computing an overall performance rating using this formula, the rating assigned by the current supervisor (the one that is to be doubled) must be checked carefully to make sure that a non-critical element is not given more weight (because of the doubling) than any critical element in the other interim ratings. (OPM regulations prohibit giving more weight to non-critical elements than to critical elements in deriving final ratings.) If, because of the doubling, the non-critical element score exceeds that of any of the critical element scores, the point score of the non-critical element must be reduced to its original total (before the doubling) and the summary point total adjusted appropriately.

5. If a senior executive has served in a covered position for more than the minimum appraisal period in another Federal agency, that agency is required to provide an interim summary rating of performance and forward it to the Department s employing office with the senior executive s Official Personnel Folder. The rating official must consider the interim rating when determining the senior executive s initial rating at the end of the appraisal cycle. If a senior executive has served on a detail to another Federal Agency for more than 120 days during the appraisal cycle, a sabbatical, or an assignment in a Federally-sponsored program such as an IPA or Executive Exchange, the personnel office must make a reasonable effort to obtain an interim summary rating from the other agency on the senior executive s performance on the detail, assignment, or sabbatical. If the interim rating is obtained, it must be considered in deriving the senior executive s initial rating at the end of the appraisal cycle. If the senior executive has served for the entire rating cycle on detail to another agency and an appraisal of performance cannot be

obtained despite reasonable efforts, the senior executive's current rating of record must be extended. If the senior executive has no current rating of record, then he or she must be given a presumptive rating of Fully Successful.

6. The senior executive must sign the initial rating to indicate that it has been discussed. A copy must be given to the senior executive. If the senior executive disagrees with the rating, he or she may comment in writing to the rating official within five working days of receipt of the appraisal and rating. If the rating official changes a rating at this point, he/she must document the reasons for the change on form CD-396A and provide a copy to the senior executive.

7. A senior executive may request a review of his/her rating by an official in a position higher than the rating official, unless there is no one at a higher level within the Department. If the senior executive requests a higher level review, his or her written response to the initial rating must be provided to the reviewer. The reviewer may comment on and must make a recommendation regarding the initial rating, but may not change it. A copy of the reviewer's comments and recommendations must be provided to the senior executive, the rating official, and the Performance Review Board (PRB).

8. The appropriate PRB must review each senior executive's initial rating and if any, the senior executive's written response and the higher level reviewer's comments and recommendations. The PRB is also authorized to conduct any further review or investigation that it finds necessary. The PRB must then recommend in writing a final rating to the Appointing Authority.

9. The Appointing Authority must consider the recommendations of the PRB and issue final ratings in writing. A copy of the final rating must be provided to each senior executive.

10. A senior executive may not appeal an appraisal and rating under the performance appraisal system. If an Appointing authority changes an initial rating, or does not accept the PRB's recommendations on a rating, he/she must inform the executive in writing on the CD-396A of the reasons for the decision.

11. Appointing Authorities must ensure that senior executives are not given awards under 5 CFR 451.103 for accomplishments properly recognized through the granting of an SES performance award (bonus).

b. Senior executives who are serving in covered positions on the last day of the appraisal period, but who are unratable because they have not served for at least 120 days during the appraisal period in a covered position must be given an annual rating of record in accordance with the provisions of paragraph .03a above (including PRB review) as soon as they have served for the minimum period. A senior executive may be unratable because of entry into a covered position within the last 119 days of the appraisal period; time in a non-pay status; long term training; service on a Federally-sponsored program such as an Intergovernmental Personnel Act of President's Executive Exchange assignment for which appraisal information is not available; service on detail to another Federal agency for which appraisal information is not available; or the departure of the senior executive's supervisor from the agency, when no other higher level

supervisor can reasonably appraise the senior executive's performance.

c. The current ratings of record of senior executives who are unratable on the last day of the appraisal period are extended if they are not then working in a covered position that can serve as a basis for an appraisal (for example, they are continuing on long-term training) and they are not expected to return to such a position within 120 days. If these senior executives have no ratings of record, they receive a presumptive rating of Fully Successful.

d. Interim Summary Ratings.

1. When a senior executive who has served in a covered position for more than 120 days in the appraisal period changes to another covered position within the Department, an interim rating must be completed by the executive's supervisor, and signed by the appointing authority. Interim ratings must also be completed when a senior executive completes a detail within the Department of more than 120 days in a covered position. In such cases, the rating must be based on the elements and standards established for the position the senior executive is leaving. Copies of the interim rating must be given to the senior executive, the gaining supervisor, and the servicing personnel office of the gaining organization. Interim ratings are not reviewed by the PRB, but copies should be furnished to the PRB when it reviews annual rating of record.

2. When a senior executive transfers from Commerce to another Federal agency after serving in a covered position in Commerce for more than 120 days, the senior executive's supervisor and the appointing authority must complete an interim rating. The interim rating must be transferred to the gaining agency or department for consideration in the senior executive's next rating of record.

3. Interim ratings are not ratings of record for reduction in force or other purposes.

e. The following summary performance ratings and no other ratings constitute rating of record:

1. The annual performance appraisal rating provided for in .03a of this section; and

2. Ratings given after the minimum appraisal period when an executive is unratable at the end of the appraisal cycle, as provided for in .03b of this section.

No other summary rating given to a senior executive of the Department constitutes a rating of record.

f. When a senior executive is rated below the Fully Successful level, the operating unit must attempt to help the senior executive to improve performance. Assistance may include, but is not limited to formal training, on-the-job training, counseling, and closer supervision.

g. The Department does not prescribe a distribution of ratings, and does not permit a distribution to be prescribed. The Department assures that only senior executives whose performance exceeds normal expectations are rated at levels above Fully Successful by the higher level review process, by PRB review, by review of plans by the personnel office, and by Departmental PME reviews.

SECTION 7. PERFORMANCE REVIEW BOARDS

.01 Operating Unit PRB s

- a. Each operating unit may establish one or more internal PRB s or combine with other operating units to establish one for mutual use.
- b. Each PRB must have at least three members and must develop a written charter (subject to approval by the Department Executive Resources Board) which:
 1. Lists required and discretionary functions;
 2. Lists criteria to be used by PRB members to review individual performance appraisals;
 3. Lists the operating procedures used by the PRB; and
 4. Identifies the PRB s membership composition, selection process, and terms of office.
- c. Appointing Authorities must appoint members to the PRB, designating one member who must be a Commerce employee as chairperson. Sufficient career senior executives must be appointed so that more than one-half of the members are career appointees. The Appointing Authority must ensure that at least one member appointed is not under his or her jurisdiction. Each member appointed must have a current performance rating of at least Fully Successful.
- d. A PRB member must not participate in a performance appraisal review when:
 1. The review pertains to that PRB member;
 2. The PRB member is the rater of the senior executive whose performance appraisal is being reviewed;
 3. The PRB member is the direct subordinate of the senior executive whose performance appraisal is being reviewed; and
 4. The PRB member was the designated higher level reviewer of the senior executive whose performance is being reviewed.
- e. The names of individuals appointed to the PRB must be published in the Federal Register within 45 days after the appointment is approved. No member may serve until this is done.

.02 Departmental Performance Review Board

- a. A DPRB must be established to provide an objective peer review of the appraisals, ratings,

and recommendations prepared by the Appointing Authorities for those senior executives whom they supervise directly. Appointing Authorities who are in the SES must also have their performance appraisals and ratings reviewed by this Board. After the DPRB review, the Board's recommendations are returned to the appropriate Appointing Authority for action.

b. The Secretary of Commerce or his/her designee serves as the Chairperson of the DPRB and selects the other members of the Board. Members of this Board may be appointed from within or outside the Department. Provisions contained in 01b-d of this section apply to this Board with the exception that the Board is not required to have at least one member who is not under the jurisdiction of the appointing authority.

SECTION 8. FAILURE TO MEET PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

.01 A senior executive who receives a level 1 rating of record, Unsatisfactory, must be reassigned or transferred within the SES, or removed from the SES.

.02 A senior executive who receives two level 1 ratings of record, Unsatisfactory, in any period of five consecutive years must be removed from the SES.

.03 A senior executive who twice in any period of three consecutive years receives less than a level 3, Fully Successful rating of record must be removed from the SES.

.04 Any action taken under this section is subject to the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 3591-95 and 5 CFR Part 359.

SECTION 9. TRAINING AND INFORMATION

.01 Servicing personnel offices are responsible for communicating the purpose and procedures of the Senior Executive Performance Appraisal System by establishing appropriate training and orientation programs. These programs must emphasize performance plan development, supervisory/management responsibility for carrying out the program, and the linkage between performance ratings and senior executive recognition and other personnel decisions.

.02 Information on changes in the operation of the Senior Executive Service Performance Appraisal System are conveyed to Department management and affected senior executives through Office of Personnel Management issuances and newsletters.

SECTION 10. EVALUATION

The Office of Personnel Management assesses the effectiveness of the Senior Executive Service Performance Appraisal System through its ongoing Personnel Management Evaluation Program. Commerce organizations are evaluated on their technical compliance with law, Office of Personnel Management regulations, and Department policy. Evaluations focus on the adequacy of performance plans and ratings as well as each organization's performance rating distribution as

related to its accomplishments as reflected in the Department's Management by Objectives Program.

SECTION 11. RECORD KEEPING

.01 Employee Performance Folders (EPF's) must be established for each senior executive; retained as separate files; and maintained by the Principal Personnel Officer. EPFs must contain at least the following information:

- a. The individual performance plans;
- b. Documentation of progress review (s);
- c. Summary appraisals and ratings;
- d. Written comments on ratings, if any;
- e. PRB/DPRB recommendations; and
- f. Nominations for bonuses and ranks.

Operating units, at their discretion, may require that additional information be kept in the EPF.

.02 All performance-related records contained in the EPF must be retained for five years.

.03 When a senior executive transfers to another operating unit within the Department, or to another Federal agency, EPF records must be transferred with the employee.

.04 Disclosure of information contained in EPFs may be made only as permitted by the Privacy Act.

SECTION 12. DEFINITIONS

Agency is the Department of Commerce.

Appointing Authority is a Secretarial Officer or the head of a primary operating unit or an official so designated by the Secretary of Commerce.

Appraisal is the act or process of evaluating the performance of a senior executive against the prescribed performance standard (s).

Appraisal Period means the period of time established by the Department's Senior Executive Service Performance Appraisal System for which a senior executive's performance will be reviewed.

Critical Element is a component of a senior executive's position consisting of one or more duties and responsibilities, which contributes toward accomplishing organizational goals and objectives and which is of such importance that unsatisfactory performance on the element would result in unsatisfactory performance in the position.

Final Rating is the rating of record assigned by the appointing authority after considering the recommendation of a Performance Review Board.

Fully Successful is level 3 of the five-level element rating scale and reflects good, sound performance, i.e., the expected level of performance.

Generic Performance Elements are performance elements which apply to a group of senior executives in an organization.

Generic Performance Standards (GPS) are performance standards which define work behaviors or activities which if engaged in by senior executives, lead to a certain level of quality in products or services. The GPS are written so that they may apply universally to groups of senior executives.

Initial Rating is the summary rating made by the senior executive's supervisor and provided to the Performance Review Board.

Interim Rating is a summary rating developed during a rating cycle to document the performance of a senior executive who is changing positions (if the senior executive served in the position for 120 days or more) or completing a detail of 120 days or more. The interim rating is not a rating of record, but is factored into the final summary rating assigned to the senior executive at the end of the rating cycle. The interim rating is completed on form CD-396, performance Plan, Progress Review, and Appraisal Record, by the losing supervisor; signed by the losing appointing authority; and forwarded to the gaining supervisor. A copy is also provided to the PRB when the annual rating of record is reviewed.

Major Activity is a task, duty, or project which needs to be accomplished in support of a critical element.

Non-critical Element is a component of a senior executive's job which does not meet the definition of a critical element, but is sufficiently important to warrant written appraisal.

Performance is a senior executive's accomplishment of assigned work as specified in the critical and non-critical elements of the senior executive's position.

Performance Management is the systematic process by which the Department integrates performance, pay, and awards systems with its basic management functions for the purpose of improving individual and organizational effectiveness in accomplishment of Department mission and goals.

Performance Plans are documents collaboratively developed by senior executives and their supervisors at the beginning of the appraisal period. They define the critical (and non-critical) elements against which senior executives' performance is appraised and establish performance standards for those elements.

Progress Review is a formal meeting between the rating official and senior executive at which the senior executive's progress toward meeting the objectives in his/her performance plan is discussed. The need for any changes to the plan may also be discussed at this meeting as well as any performance deficiencies the supervisor has noted along with recommendations for improving them.

Rating (also referred to as summary rating) is written record of the appraisal of each critical and non-critical element and the assignment of a summary rating level (as specified in 430.305).

Rating Official is the person responsible for informing the covered senior executive of the critical elements of his/her position, establishing performance standards for those elements, appraising performance, and assigning the initial rating. Normally, this is the senior executive's immediate supervisor.

Rating of Record is the summary rating, under 5 U.S.C. 4312, required at the time specified in the Department's Senior executive Service Performance Appraisal System, or at other times specified for special circumstances.

Unsatisfactory is level 1 of the five-level rating scale or two levels below Fully Successful.